



PICO California

February 11, 2013

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave
Washington D.C 20500

Dear President Obama:

I am writing to ask for your consideration of Fred Ross, Sr., as a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. PICO California is the largest grassroots community organizing effort in California, and our efforts are built on many of the teachings and influence of Fred Ross, Sr. Fred played a crucial role in a number of social transformations of our state and nation, including working with “Okie” migrant farmworkers in the 1940’s, Japanese-Americans interned during World War II, and Mexican-American workers throughout the state. His work focused on providing training and support to grassroots leaders who then went on to transform their communities and our state.

Notably, Fred trained both Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, who went on to become two of the most important civil rights leaders in our country’s history. He also trained a number of community organizers who went on to lead the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in the South in the 1960’s.

PICO California continues to follow the path pioneered by Fred and others who dedicated their lives to the development of grassroots leaders to change our communities, state and nation based on shared values. Because of Fred Ross, Sr.’s role in the history of California and the nation, we encourage you to consider him as a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. We believe it would be particularly appropriate for this honor to be bestowed by the first community organizer ever to occupy the White House.

PICO California is comprised of 19 congregation-based community organizations representing 480 congregations and 450,000 families throughout the state. Our mission is to develop leadership and build capacity for civic engagement in congregations and communities throughout California. We develop solutions to issues facing our families and engage congregations in building stronger communities. Through our member organizations in each

community, PICO California unites people of diverse economic, racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Together, we form the largest grassroots network in the state. In 2012, PICO California engaged in the state's largest volunteer civic engagement effort to turn out new and occasional voters and pass Proposition 30. Statewide, we contacted more than 175,000 voters as a result of this effort. PICO California is a statewide organizing effort of the PICO National Network.

Thank you so very much for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Corey Timpson', written in a cursive style.

Corey Timpson
Director, PICO California